

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Pending claims 1, 16 and 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §101 as allegedly not producing a concrete, useful and tangible result. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection. As to claim 1, a method is recited in which two variable length packets are written into a buffer and an output word of a fixed length is transmitted therefrom. Thus this writing, storage and transmission of data from a buffer produces a concrete, useful and tangible result. Accordingly, the §101 rejection is overcome as to claim 1 and for at least the same reasons so too is the §101 rejection of claim 16 also overcome. Regarding independent claim 20, tangible hardware, including a switch fabric and a storage buffer is recited, along with a decoder that operates as set forth in the claim. Accordingly, the §101 rejection is overcome with regard to claim 20 also.

Pending claims 1, 3-6, 12, 15, 16, 18-26 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 6,798,784 (Dove). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection. As to claim 1, Dove nowhere teaches writing two variable length packets to different portions of a buffer via two different ports of the buffer at the same time, where the first packet is pre-rotated prior to the writing and the second is written without pre-rotation. In this regard, the Office Action apparently contends that a multiplexer is a recited first portion of a buffer. However, all that the Office Action points to for support is column 6, line 15 of Dove, which in fact teaches the lack of multiplexers, namely that using the invention of Dove, the need for add/drop multiplexers is eliminated. For this reason alone, the rejection cannot stand.

Furthermore, Dove fails to teach writing of two variable length packets to different portions of a buffer at the same time via different ports. Rather in Dove, different data packets are sent to different FIFOs. *E.g.*, Dove, col. 23, ln. 65 – col. 24, ln. 4 and col. 25, lns. 10-19. Furthermore, Dove fails to teach the recited pre-rotation of one of the packets. In this regard, the Office Action appears to contend that this subject matter is met by the teaching in Dove that variable length packets can be preempted. However, preemption is not the recited pre-rotation of an incoming packet. Instead, in Dove preemption appears to mean that a packet is not stored and instead a queue manager keeps track of a status of the queue. Dove, col. 24, lns. 7-13. Nowhere does Dove teach or suggest that an incoming variable length packet is pre-rotated prior to storage. For all these reasons, claim 1 and the claims depending therefrom are patentable over Dove. For at least the same reasons, claim 16 and the claims depending therefrom are patentable over Dove.

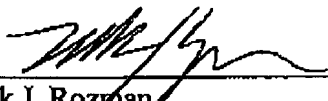
Regarding independent claim 12, Dove nowhere teaches a write decoder that includes both a thermometer decoder and a shifter coupled to receive outputs of the thermometer decoder. In this regard, all the Office Action points to is tables in Dove that show a number of interface queues and a queue control structure that includes different fields. None of this however anywhere teaches or suggests either a decoder having n inputs and to select how many of m outputs are active based on the n inputs, or a shifter coupled to the recited thermometer decoder to receive both the decoder outputs and an address input to determine an amount of rotation for the m outputs based on that address input. As such, claim 12 and the claims depending therefrom are patentable over Dove. For at least the same reasons claim 20 and the claims depending therefrom are patentable over Dove.

New dependent claims 31-35 are patentable for at least the same reasons as the independent claims from which they depend.

In view of these remarks, the application is now in condition for allowance and the Examiner's prompt action in accordance therewith is respectfully requested. The Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fees or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 20-1504.

Respectfully submitted,

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